

# MR. AND MRS. JOSEPH COX, PIONEERS, AND THEIR DESCENDANTS

*Hand written by **Rev. John E. Cox**. Read before the Posey County Historical Society at Mt. Vernon, Ind, October 19, 1923.*

*John E. Cox was b. 14 Oct 1850, d. 5 Dec. 1932 in Evansville, Indiana. His parents were Joshua and Caroline (Britton) Cox.<sup>1</sup>*

*Transcribed by Steve Malone, 31 Aug 2011. Annotated by Steve Malone January 2014. From Families of Posey County, microfilm of type- and manuscripts located in the Alexandrian Public Library, Mount Vernon, Indiana. FHL US/CAN Film, 1433523, Item 2.*

-----

**Joseph Cox** – distinguished from numerous other citizens of the same name, as “**General**” **Joe Cox** – was the son of **John Cox**.<sup>2</sup> He was born in South Carolina,<sup>3</sup> March 16, 1791 and died in Posey County, Indiana in 1865 about 75 years of age.<sup>4</sup> We have no information as to the location of his birth place. And we know nothing of the history of his parents beyond the name of his father.

His wife’s name was **Elizabeth Hunsacker** [sic: **Hunsinger**]. Her birth place was on the extreme western border of Pennsylvania. She was born Feb 12<sup>th</sup> 1793, and died in Posey County, Indiana, Feb. 17<sup>th</sup> 1879, aged about 86 years.

It is to be regretted that a comprehensive history of these pioneers cannot be written. But like most of our pioneers of that early period, they have left but little data on which to base such a history. Like all of our early settlers, they accepted their experiences in a matter of fact spirit. All of their lives they had been accustomed to privations, hardships and dangers and they did not consider these of enough importance to make a record of them. But there are grandchildren and neighbors still living, who have heard them tell of their experiences. But a few more deaths and these will pass away. So it behooves us to

---

<sup>1</sup> *Indiana Authors and Their Books*, Indiana University website, <http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/inauthors/welcome.do?brand=ia-books>.

<sup>2</sup> The will of John Cox was written 28 Jan 1826 and probated on 7 Jul 1827. It names the following sons and daughters: John Cox, Jr., Jonathan Cox, William McFerson (son-in-law), Joseph Cox and Jemimah (Cox) Johnson. *Posey County Wills*, Book A, page 81. John Cox, Senior died on 26 May 1827, aged 73 years.

<sup>3</sup> This is confirmed by the 1850 Census, however the 1860 Census states that he was born in Kentucky. The same author, in a family history written in 1931, states that he was born in North Carolina.

<sup>4</sup> *Find A Grave*, memorial #42287959, Fillingim Cemetery, Posey County, Indiana. Date of death listed as 20 Dec 1865.

place in permanent form what little we do know, that the memory of these heroic pioneers does not perish from among men.

**Joseph and Elizabeth Hunsacker Cox** were remarkable people at a time marked by people of strong characteristics.

**Mrs. Cox** could relate narratives of her childhood out of the ordinary. The hostile Indians from Ohio would raid the border settlers and she saw many of these savages. In one raid her brother was killed. Several other persons were also killed and some taken away as captives. A young man was slashed across his abdomen with a knife and his intestines protruded, in which condition he was forced to carry a heavy kettle until he dropped from exhaustion. At the same time a neighbor boy was taken away as captive, and when the savages tortured some of the prisoners they made the boy assist in their deviltries. The boy made his escape and got back home, and **Mrs. Cox** remembered well his arrival among friends.

**Joseph and Elizabeth** were married in 1810, presumably in Pennsylvania.<sup>5</sup> He was 19 years old and she was 17. Soon, they emigrated to Christian County, Ky., but not liking that part of the country they came to what is now Center Township, Posey County and settled. Their home was a mile or two west of Wadesville.

**Joseph Cox** was a soldier at the battle of Tippecanoe and also served in the War of 1812, for which service his widow received a government pension.<sup>6</sup> Two of his grandsons tell us they have heard him tell of his military service – these are **Mr. Louis** [sic: **Lewis**] **Cox** of Center township<sup>7</sup> and **Mr. Joseph A. Cox** of Mt. Vernon, Ind.,<sup>8</sup> who is 82 years old, the oldest living grandchild. He has a vivid remembrance of his grandfather telling how he fought the Indians in the Indian fashion, from behind a tree.

**Mr. James Haines** of Poseyville,<sup>9</sup> one of the oldest and most honored citizens of the county tells how and where the “**General**” came from: In the days of the block houses the border people agreed among themselves that in the event of an Indian raid, **Joseph Cox** should be their leader, because of his experience. They called him their “**General**” and the title stuck and he was known ever afterward as “**General Joe Cox.**”

---

<sup>5</sup> The notion that Joseph Cox had migrated from South Carolina to the Pennsylvania frontier is highly flawed. The author of this story later wrote a more detailed family history in 1931, at which time he had deduced that they had been married in Muhlenberg County, Kentucky in 1810. Her husband's War of 1812 pension files states that she was married Dec 1818 in Muhlenberg County, Kentucky.

<sup>6</sup> Ancestry.com's *War of 1812 Pension Application Files Index, 1812-1815*. He was a Private in Capt. Thomas Stokes' Company, Kentucky Militia. His wife's application number was 5466; her pension certificate number was 2894. Joseph received 40 acres of bounty land for his service in 1850 (#6053) and another 120 acres in 1855 (#50893).

<sup>7</sup> Lewis W. Cox, b. 8 Aug 1848, d. 14 Feb 1933. *Find A Grave*, memorial #5992941, Laurel Hill Cemetery, Posey County, Indiana. A grandson by General Joe's son Joseph.

<sup>8</sup> Joseph A. Cox, b. 31 Aug 1842, d. 15 May 1936. *Find A Grave*, memorial #5989519, Laurel Hill Cemetery. A grandson by General Joe's son David.

<sup>9</sup> Probably James M. Hanes, b. about 1850 (1850 Census), d. 1823. *Find A Grave*, memorial #65974751, Mount Pleasant Cemetery, Poseyville, Indiana.

**Mr. Haines** relates a little incident deserving of a place here: In the old days when the men had to meet at stated times and places to muster and drill the people of Center township met at the home of **Maj. Nash**,<sup>10</sup> who was mustering officer. On one occasion the men were all in line with **Maj. Nash** walked before them and said: “Men, I am pleased to tell you that we have with us today for muster **General Joe Cox** and five of his stalwart sons.”

This announcement was received with handclapping and applause.

There were born to **Joseph** and **Elizabeth Cox** eleven children and every one of them girls, except ten! These ten boys grew up to manhood, married and most of them have many descendants living. All of the second generation are gone. The girl married **Grackus [Gracchus?] Fillingam** [sic: **Fillingim**].

This big family were good citizens, honorable and useful in their day and generation.

Their names were as follows:

<b>John</b>	born March 8 <sup>th</sup> , 1812	died June 14, 1849	aged 37 years. <sup>11</sup>
<b>David</b>	born April 13, 1813	died Oct. 22, 1876	aged 63 years. <sup>12</sup>
<b>Allen</b>	born Nov. 13, 1814	died Dec. 16, 186 [sic]	aged 48 years. <sup>13</sup>
<b>Elijah</b>	born Jan. 20, 1815	died Mar. 9, 1892	aged 77 years. <sup>14</sup>
<b>Lowranah</b>			
[sic: <b>Lurana</b> ]	born May 15, 1818	died Oct. 24, 1896	aged 78 years. <sup>15</sup>
<b>Joseph</b>	born March 20, 1820	died June 21, 1883	aged 63 years. <sup>16</sup>
<b>Benjamin</b>	born Aug. 19, 1822	died May 8, 1892	aged 70 years. <sup>17</sup>
<b>Stinson</b>	born Nov. 16, 1823	died June 6, 1896	aged 73 years. <sup>18</sup>
<b>Jackson</b>	born May 8, 1825	died Nov. 4, 1895	aged 71 years. <sup>19</sup>
<b>George W.</b>	born Sept 17, 1826	[died Jun. 7, 1902] <sup>20</sup>	
<b>Isaac</b>	born Nov 24, 1829	died Nov. 17, 1886	aged 57 years. <sup>20</sup>

**General Joe Cox** and wife were members of the Bethlehem Church of Primitive Baptists, and were faithful, loyal members. They often held religious services in their home. Their home, too, was noted for hospitality.

<sup>10</sup> Major Jesse Nash, b. 1802, d. 16 Feb 1878. *Find A Grave*, memorial #64549529, Bethlehem Cemetery, Posey County, Indiana.

<sup>11</sup> *Find A Grave*, #11649449, Moore Cemetery, Posey County, Indiana, b. 18 May 1813, d. 7 Oct 1849, age 46 years, 4 months, 19 days.

<sup>12</sup> *Find A Grave*, memorial #94838706, Fillingim Cemetery, Posey County, Indiana (dates are mis-transcribed).

<sup>13</sup> *Find A Grave*, memorial #104202027, Poseyville Cemetery, Poseyville, Indiana.

<sup>14</sup> *Find A Grave*, memorial #7542512, Fillingim Cemetery, Posey County, Indiana.

<sup>15</sup> *Find A Grave*, memorial #14878046, Laurel Hill Cemetery, Posey County, Indiana.

<sup>16</sup> *Find A Grave*, memorial #94827400, Fillingim Cemetery, Posey County, Indiana.

<sup>17</sup> *Find A Grave*, memorial #38042346, Bethlehem Cemetery, Posey County, Indiana.

<sup>18</sup> *Find A Grave*, memorial #75297195, Mount Pleasant Cemetery, White County, Illinois.

<sup>19</sup> *Find A Grave*, memorial #67110650, Bethlehem Cemetery, Posey County, Indiana.

<sup>20</sup>

At the funeral of **Elizabeth** it was stated in the obituary that she had been a member of the church for 57 years. At the time of her death her descendants numbered: children 11; grandchildren 71; great grandchildren 126; great, great grandchildren 1 – total 209.

It would be interesting to know what the number would be now. The descendants of **Elijah Cox** alone would number about 125 persons.

It was my privilege to meet and converse with this bright, intelligent and interesting old lady, about four or five months before her death. I was visiting relatives in this Cox locality. A religious service was held at the Cox school house and **Grandmother “Betty”** was given the place of honor in front of the preacher. She sat through the service with a little babe on her lap – a great, great grandchild. The old lady and the babe were extremes of five generations. The babe was named **Williams** and is now a married man with grown children.

Such sturdy, brave, self sacrificing as the pioneers were, were the foundation of our present high state of civilization, and we do well to honor their memory.

These pioneers were buried in the Fillingam [sic: Fillingim] Cemetery, near their old home.

-----

Let me add a postscript. There were five or six **Cox** families who were pioneers of the northern part of Posey County. But if these were related we have no evidence of the fact, though most came from the Carolinas. There were three or four named **John Cox** and all had “nicknames” to distinguish them. **Double-Head John Cox**<sup>21</sup> came when the Piankashaw Indians lived near, on the Black River. He built the first block house fort in the county, probably, which was located west of Stewartsville a mile or two. My grandfather known as “**Laughing John Cox**”<sup>22</sup> came to the county about the time the state was organized or soon after. My grandfather, **Thomas Cox**,<sup>23</sup> a son of **Double Heads**, and **Elijah**, a son of **General Joe Cox**, were brothers-in-law, having married sisters who were daughters of **Thomas Price**, a Colonial war and Revolutionary War soldier.<sup>24</sup> So if the older Coxes were not related, many of the later generations are blood relatives through these and other inter-marriages.

---

<sup>21</sup> *Find A Grave*, memorial #63595010, Bethlehem Cemetery, Poseyville, Indiana: b. 11 May 1773, d. 9 Jan 1854.

<sup>22</sup> *Find A Grave*, memorial #20099536, Poplar Church Cemetery, Gallatin County, Illinois: b. 25 Dec 1798, d. 20 Oct 1867.

<sup>23</sup> *Find A Grave*, memorial #69219004, Bethlehem Cemetery, Poseyville, Indiana: b. 1801, d. 1867.

<sup>24</sup> This statement appears to be flawed. Thomas’ son William married Elizabeth Eaton. Their daughter Elizabeth married Elijah B. Cox. And it was their daughter Sally who married Thomas G. Cox. Source: page 57 of *Thomas Price (a pioneer in Posey County, Indiana) and his descendants* by Rev. John E. Cox (1926) and *Posey County Wills*, book B, pages 193 to 195.